GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

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Contents for Week of November 22, 1937. Vol. XVI. No. 20.

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Photograph by Maynard Owen Williams

A STREAMLINED "SHIP OF THE DESERT" NOW FLASHES ACROSS TUNISIAN SANDS

France has spent much time and money bringing modern improvements to her North African colonies. This Diesel-driven train connects the city of Tunis with Bizerte, naval station on the Mediterranean. Beside it stands an old-type train, with steps to the brakeman's lookout (Bulletin No. 1).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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French War Planes Drone over North Africa

TO THE fast-growing list of "trouble spots" throughout the world add French North Africa, where mob violence and native disorders have made virtual martial law necessary. War planes of France, forming the largest air fleet ever sent to her colonies, are holding maneuvers over Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia to awe Arab terrorists and to demonstrate the power available for defense of the vast North African dominion over which floats the French tricolor.

More than one-third of the total area of Africa is under French control, including a large share of the huge Sahara; and the combined French dominions are larger than the entire continental United States.

Master of 4,000,000 square miles of African territory, France rules the largest area of all the six European nations which among them control all but a tiny fraction of Africa. Her African domains are 19 times the size of France itself, though many are thinly populated.

Source of Food, Supplies and Soldiers

Of special concern to the mother country are Algeria, French Morocco, and Tunisia, which lie across the Mediterranean from France and form a valuable reservoir both of food supplies and of native soldiers. From these colonies France imports wheat, cotton, groundnuts (peanuts), palm oil, rubber, cocoa, tobacco, timber, hides, and wine. Troops from these regions fought valiantly for France in the World War.

French North Africa is a huge keystone-shaped area, twice as large as Alaska, with Algeria forming its main portion. Its top fronts on the Mediterranean Sea, Morocco, and Tunisia form its upper western and eastern corners, and its base pushes far down below the Tropic of Cancer into the waterless waste of the Great Desert (Sahara). Only a strip of Algeria, along the seacoast, has sufficient rain to make it of real importance. Here, between the mountains and the sea are orange groves, palm trees, vegetable farms that supply early European markets, and huge vineyards rivaling those of southern France. Cotton and grain also are grown.

Farther south the dry plains are good only for sheep and goat grazing and the growing of alfa grass which is used in paper-making. Then comes the Sahara, which means "Great Desert" (illustration, inside cover), a land that is desolate essentially because the wind blows over it from the wrong direction. Prevailing air currents are from the dry land instead of from the sea.

Algeria a Century under Military Rule

Just 110 years ago, in 1827, the Dey of Algeria struck a French consul with his fly-whisk when the official complained about treatment of two Frenchmen in Algiers. This act led to a French blockade and eventual conquest of the country, though the vast southern territory was not entirely brought under control until 1900, and is still under military rule.

Morocco, itself as big as France, mainly faces on the Atlantic, with the Atlas Mountains forming a backbone that rises 10,000 feet in places (illustration, next page). It has been chiefly under French control since 1912, except for the narrow strip of Spanish Morocco along its Mediterranean coast on the north, the tiny patch

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Photograph from Lehnert

CAMELS AND GOWNED MOSLEMS PAUSE TO REST ON THE CREST OF A DESERT "WAVE"

French North Africa is flanked by three seas—the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and the vast barren sea of sand known as the Sahara. Not all of the latter, however, is given over to swelling dunes. Fertile valleys and green oases produce wheat, barley, oranges, lemons, olives and dates (Bulletin No. 1).

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Busy Bee Not So Busy—Result: Honey Shortage

MAYBE it's sunspots. Maybe the "sit-down" idea has spread to the insect world. Anyway, the busy bee has not been as busy as he might have been lately. Experts of the U. S. Department of Agriculture are puzzled about one of the shortest crops of white honey on record.

Complete estimates are not yet in, but it appears that there will also be a short crop of all varieties of honey, although there have been no reports of drought nor blight in the honey producing areas of the country, and no outstanding new uses developed for one of the oldest answers to man's craving for sweets.

Although hundreds of plants secrete nectar, only about two dozen species furnish honey in market quantity.

Many Acres of Certain Plants Needed

The layman thinks of a spacious garden as a rich haven for honeybees. But all the flower gardens in the beautiful city of Washington probably would maintain not more than 24 or 25 colonies of bees.

Honey production on a commercial scale must be carried on where there are many acres of a plant from which the bees can obtain more nectar than is needed for their immediate requirements.

In most sections of the United States there is usually one particular flower from which the bees produce a surplus crop. In carrying on brood rearing, and in obtaining enough honey for their own needs, they visit plants and trees of endless variety.

Bees freely visit apple blossoms, for example, yet apple-blossom honey is practically unknown. There are too few apple blossoms, and the blossom period is in early spring when honey requirements of the colony are so great during brood rearing that the bees consume the nectar as rapidly as it is gathered. The same is true of many flowers.

Great Lakes Region Rich Honey Area

Perhaps the most concentrated honey-producing section in the United States is that surrounding the Great Lakes, where the white Dutch clover, the common variety that grows so abundantly on our lawns, reaches the peak of perfection. There the bees also produce a surplus from alsike clover, sweet clover, basswood, buckwheat, and occasional crops from raspberry and milkweed.

Another rich area is on the Pacific coast, where the heavily scented orange groves furnish thousands of pounds of highly flavored honey. The foothills of California supply sparkling sage honey, and a bountiful quota of alfalfa honey comes annually from the Imperial Valley.

The whitest honey of all, often waterwhite, is produced from the fireweed, which grows in the burnt-over forests of Washington and Oregon. The Intermountain States send to our eastern and foreign markets carloads of alfalfa and sweet-clover honey, heavy and flavorous.

The Dakotas and the surrounding States rank high in large crops. There 100 pounds a colony from sweet clover and alfalfa is not unusual, and crops of 200 to 250 pounds to the colony are frequent in favorable seasons.

Many kinds of honey plants occur in the Southern States, where the honeys

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known as Ifni, also Spanish, on the Atlantic side, and the International Zone of Tangier opposite Gibraltar.

Tunisia, about the size of Louisiana, separates the seaboard parts of Algeria and Libia, and has been a French protectorate since 1881 (illustration, cover).

The population of all three states, totalling 15,888,000, about that of New York State and Indiana combined, is overwhelmingly Moslem, with a minority of Jews and Europeans. Agriculture is the chief industry. Morocco raises wheat, barley, beans, chickpeas, canary seed, linseed, olives, almonds, oranges, lemons, walnuts, and cattle, sheep and goats.

Tunisia produces much the same type of farm products. Citrus fruits grow well in its northeastern section. In the south, dates are the leading crop. The supplies of phosphate in Tunisia are deemed almost inexhaustible. Iron, lead, zinc, tin, manganese, mercury and copper are taken from North African mines.

In the large towns slender minarets and square, plain native houses separated by alleys often too narrow for wheeled traffic form a sharp contrast to the more modern sections with broad boulevards, government buildings and the sidewalk cafés that are typically French. Detachments of the famous French Foreign Legion are stationed in all three colonies, along with regular French troops and native regiments under French officers.

A railroad parallels the Mediterranean coastline from near the border of Italian Libia to Casablanca, on Morocco's Atlantic coast, passing south of Spanish Morocco. A network of automobile roads crisscrosses the country, extending even down into the Sahara. Regular air routes cross Morocco and Algeria from north to south.

Note: French Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria, France's North African domain, are described in the following: "Time's Footprints in Tunisian Sands," *National Geographic Magazine*, March, 1937; "Fez, Heart of Morocco," June, 1935; "Beyond the Grand Atlas," March, 1932; "The White City of Algiers," February, 1928; "Through the Deserts and Jungles of Africa by Motor," June, 1926; "Across French and Spanish Morocco," March, 1925; and "Tunisia, Where Sea and Desert Meet," (insert of color pictures), April, 1924.

To locate places mentioned in news reports about disturbances in France's North African possessions, see The Society's Map of Africa which was issued as a supplement to the June, 1935, issue of the *National Geographic Magazine*.

Bulletin No. 1, November 22, 1937.

Photograph by Flandrin

HIS HOME IS ON THE DESERT'S RIM WHERE THE SHEEP GRAZE BEST

Southern Morocco is a land of nomads. Tent villages are moved constantly to new pastures, and are held by only the most feeble ties to any form of government other than tribal. Even the outposts of the French Foreign Legion exercise little control over these wanderers unless they become unruly. Their black tents are woven of camel and goat hair, and their flocks of sheep provide nearly all the necessities of life.

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The Seychelle Islands: Lonely Paradise for Exiles

AN EDEN in miniature, the Seychelle Islands have been characterized by travelers. Hence it may seem strange that this tiny group has been selected as a suitable place to exile the five members of Palestine's Higher Arab Committee, whom the British hold indirectly responsible for recent outrages in the Holy Land.

Chief asset of the Seychelle colony as a parking place for trouble-makers is its remoteness. Far out in the Indian Ocean, about 750 miles northeast of Madagascar, they bob up from the lonely blue sea. The combined area of the 92 islets is only 156 square miles.

Palestine's five Arabs, however, will not be the first rebels to be interned on Seychelles' coral strand. Entertaining exiles has become almost an industry since the dethroned king of Ashanti was sent there, later followed by the mutinous monarchs of Uganda and Unyoro, and by the fiery Zaghloul Pasha of Egypt.

As in Bermuda, Houses Are Made of Coral

Besides exiles, the Seychelles are noteworthy for coral and coconuts. Approaching vessels steam through coral reefs to arrive at Port Victoria, chief town of the group on the main island, Mahe. And the town itself lies glistening in the sun like a city of marble, for, as in Bermuda, coral rocks are used in building the neat, compact houses.

Coconut products form the principal commodity of export but the coconut which made the island famous is the coco-de-mer, which weighs forty pounds or so, requires seven to ten years to ripen, and grows on trees that take thirty-five years to bear leaves.

This "coconut of the sea" was known before the islands were discovered, because the great double coconuts were cast up by the waves upon the shores of East Africa. They were believed to be of submarine origin and the native medicine men made much of them (illustration, next page).

The Seychelles are the island gems of the Indian Ocean. With their dependencies, the Amirantes and many others, their administrative area comprises nearly 100 small islands and reefs.

Not Named for "Sea Shells"

The Seychelles proper lie almost 1,000 miles east of Zanzibar. The French names of the individual islands frequently denote the outstanding quality about them which appealed to early explorers: such as Silhouette, Curieuse (curious), La Digue (the dam), and Felicite (blessed).

The name of the entire group, however, is not a variation of "sea shells," as might be suspected, but was given in honor of the finance minister under the French King, Louis XV.

Dense jungles, curious plant specimens, great trees festooned with trailers, orchids and ferns and begonias, green coral reefs and equable climate all make the Seychelles group as delightful as the South Sea Islands of poetic fiction. One reason they have not "registered" with globe trotters and adventurous spirits is that they lack the picturesque natives of Tahiti or the Marquesas.

When the Portuguese found them about the time America was discovered, they were uninhabited—almost a unique condition for land units of their size and habitability. Eleven years before the Pilgrims set foot on Plymouth Rock an

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run the gamut of the color scale. Usually the honeys from the South are dark, spicy, and highly flavored.

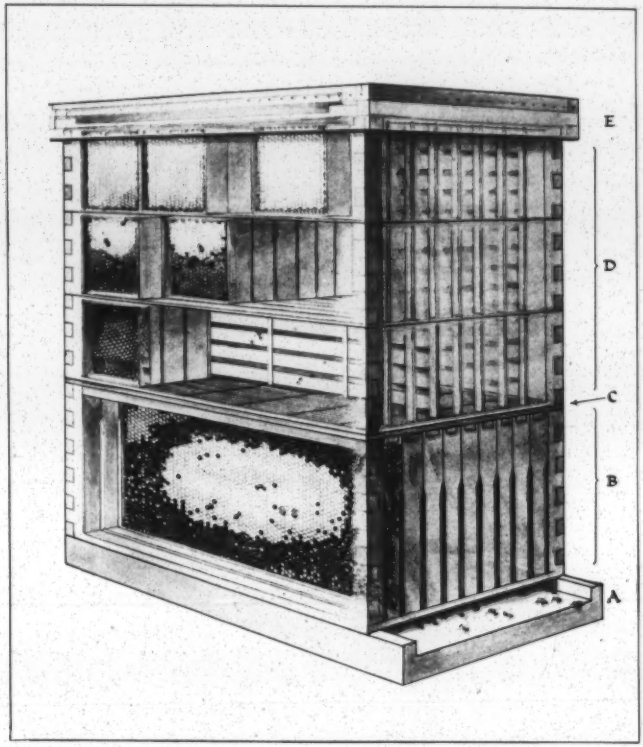
Production of Honey More Widespread Than Grains, Potatoes

Probably no other food is produced over a wider area than honey. Wheat, corn, milk, and potatoes are almost universal, yet their production is restricted to areas having certain soil and climatic conditions, whereas the mountains, the swamps, the deserts, the wind-swept plains, and the Tropics all add their quotas of honey.

Note: See also "Man's Winged Ally, The Busy Honeybee," in the *National Geographic Magazine*, April, 1935.

This article, with its black and white and color photographs, is included in "Our Insect Friends and Foes and Spiders," published by the National Geographic Society. A pamphlet describing this and other books published by The Society may be had upon request.

Bulletin No. 2, November 22, 1937.



Drawing by Hashime Murayama

"BEE CITY" HAS POLICE, STOREHOUSES, NURSERY, AND AIR CONDITIONING

This artist's drawing of a modern beehive shows the bees entering the guarded doorway across the bottom board (A). The queen lives in the 10-frame nursery or brood chamber (B). The patch of capped cells in the long lower comb contains the brood, not honey. Immediately above, a wire screen, or "queen excluder" (C), with spaces large enough to allow only workers to pass through, prevents Her Majesty from invading the honey storehouse above and laying eggs in (D). No larvae are found in the square honeycombs, which may some day grace a family table. The cover (E) protects the colony from rain, and contains an insulating air space.

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Barcelona, State and National Capital

AGAIN Loyalist Spain has a new capital. First it was Madrid; then Valencia; and now it is Barcelona.

Barcelona, at once ancient and modern, is Spain's first port in size and volume of business, and, since Madrid has been under siege for nearly a year and a half, it is today probably the largest city in Spain.

Removal of the seat of government to Barcelona gives the city a dual rôle as capital, because it has been for some time headquarters of the self-governing and almost independent Province of Catalonia. Since 1932 this big northeastern corner of Spain has had its own parliament and its own President.

Scene of Columbus' Triumphant Return

The importance of its spacious harbor as a port dates back to the second century. Columbus sailed here in triumph after his return from the New World, and his imposing monument now looks down on the harbor to commemorate the event.

Barcelona, often a hotbed of political intrigue, was once so dissatisfied with conditions in Spain that it sought annexation to France. Since the outbreak of the Civil War it has been allied with the Loyalist regime, but it has suffered little damage from either Rebel planes or ships. Most of the destruction of property in the Catalan capital is the result of internal strife which has rent the city on numerous occasions.

In the old part of the city, once surrounded by a wall, some of the canyonlike streets survive, many so narrow that the wheels of carts nearly scrape both curbs as they pass, and balconied windows of flanking buildings nearly meet. But many of these crooked lanes open into wide streets, lined with modern structures. The hub of Barcelona is the Plaza de Catalonia, a broad square which is crowded in peace times.

New Style of Architecture

The most modern touch in the city is contributed by the new buildings of pure "Barcelona" architecture, the lines of which simulate ocean waves in stucco, or are fantastic departures from the Gothic, as in the new cathedral (illustration, next page).

Barcelona, with its thousands of factories, and its fine harbor, is the chief supply base of Loyalist Spain. From it pours a steady stream of munitions of war, and much of the clothing and food now being supplied to the forces in the field. Since the nearby island of Majorca began to send raiding squadrons of Rebel planes to Barcelona, the shop windows have been plastered with strips of paper in crisscross designs to prevent their shattering when heavy bombs explode.

Except for such measures, and the sandbagging of public buildings, life goes on very much as usual in the boulevards, stores and theaters of this great metropolitan center.

Note: For background material about Barcelona, Spain, see "Barcelona, Pride of the Catalans," in the March, 1929, issue of the *National Geographic Magazine*. Additional photographs of Loyalist Spain's new capital will be found in the following: "We Escape from Madrid," *National Geographic Magazine*, February, 1937; "Turbulent Spain," October, 1936; "By Seaplane to Six Continents," September, 1928; and "Looking Down on Europe," March, 1925.

Bulletin No. 4, November 22, 1937.

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English vessel stopped there; but it was nearly a century and a half later that the French settled there and claimed them. Later they were captured by the British, who govern the Seychelles to-day as a "Crown Colony."

The present population consists largely of French Creoles, freed slaves imported from Africa, settlers from Mauritius, a few Indians from Malabar and a few Chinese. Beginning with secret spice groves to combat the existing Dutch monopoly, their economic development turned to vanilla, then to coconuts and cinnamon, which still are the principal products. Within the present century experiments were begun with rubber.

On some of the smaller islands the natives eke out a living by hunting birds' eggs and scraping guano off the granite to sell to the plantations of Mahe. The islands now support about 29,000 people.

Note: The Seychelle Islands can be located on the National Geographic Society's Map of Africa, which was issued as a supplement to the June, 1935, issue of the *National Geographic Magazine*. Information about this and other wall maps published by The Society can be obtained from the Washington, D. C., headquarters of The Society.

Bulletin No. 3, November 22, 1937.

Photograph by Dr. David Fairchild

FOR MANY YEARS THE SOURCE OF THE COCO-DE-MER WAS A MYSTERY

Long before the Seychelle Islands were discovered, these huge black seeds, called "double coconuts," drifted ashore in the Orient, where they were believed to be of submarine origin. Native medicine men used them in jungle rites. This healthy specimen was raised from a Seychelle Island seed in the botanic garden at Georgetown, British Guiana. The eight large fruits weigh 40 pounds or more each, and take from 7 to 10 years to ripen.

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Stevenson's Discoveries in the "Land of Counterpane"

EVERY year revives the literary dilemma of whether to have a Robert Louis Stevenson celebration on November 13. That used to be his birthday, but he gave it away. Finding little Anna Ide lamenting that her birthday collided with Christmas, resulting in a half-quota of gifts, he gallantly gave her his birthday.

The day must serve, however, for memorials on the part of R.L.S. Societies, friends who remember the tall thin author, and readers who gathered their first poesies from his *Child's Garden of Verses,* dug their first doubloons on Treasure Island, and suffered youthful chills and nightmares over *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.*

Geographers, too, may light a belated candle on the Stevenson birthday cake. As surely as "my shadow" goes in and out with the puzzled child, so a fanciful geography based on Stevenson's descriptions haunts the textbooks. Whatever places his pen has touched lose their true outlines in a rosy distortion of romance. Stevenson made London, in spite of its sunshine and gardens, a twilight city forever sinister with dim lamplight and chocolate-colored fog, where Markheim interviews his conscience above a murdered pawnbroker, or Dr. Jekyll tampers with the alchemy of personality.

Treasure Island Exists Only in Sick-Bed Geography

Every blue island denting the horizon is hopefully scanned by Stevenson addicts for the naked spire of Spy-glass Hill soaring above timberline, or some other resemblance to that Treasure Island "shaped like a fat dragon standing up" on Billy Bones's map. There is always a question whether all the gold pieces were gathered from the sandy floor of Ben Gunn's cave. The question lingers, although the island has never been identified in any atlas. The scenery was stolen, Stevenson admitted, from California.

For the weak-lunged, strong-hearted Scotsman consulted geography as his best doctor, read his prescriptions from maps. They lured him halfway around the world to taste different climates for his health. But for geographic background, he consulted mainly his memory and the bed. Much of his writing was done in the posture of his delicate childhood, "when I was sick and lay abed with two pillows at my head." The adult author again sent his "ships in fleets all up and down among the sheets," or brought his "trees and houses out and planted cities all about" the sick bed.

In his geography of the "pleasant land of counterpane," Scotland occupies most territory, with all roads leading to the great gloomy city of Edinburgh, "smoking like a kiln." Next to Sir Walter Scott, it was Stevenson who studded his native country most generously with literary landmarks. A humble old inn of the village of South Queensberry, near Edinburgh, is still pointed out as the scene of Captain Hoseason's plotting with a treacherous uncle to shanghai David Balfour, of *Kidnapped,* and to sell him into slavery in the Carolinas.

Scene of a Duel with Bagpipes

The wild cliffy island of Mull on the coast of western Scotland, and its off-lying granite islet of Erraid, saw shanghaied David cast up from a wrecked ship. His wanderings eastward, as a fugitive after the historic Appin murder in a Campbell-Stewart feud of the Highlands, have given literary distinction to the village of Balquhidder, scene of a duel with bagpipes. Likewise renowned is the end of Balfour's trail at a high open spot on a by-way into Edinburgh, still called "Rest and Be Thankful."

Similar fictions come to life in the real-life Scots setting of *Weir of Hermiston,* whose "hanging judge" lived at Braxfield outside Glasgow; in *Catriona,* starting with the mill hamlet of Dean; in *St. Ives,* with the solid old Castle of Edinburgh as prison, its rock precipice lending thrills to the escape; and in the *Master of Ballantrae,* beginning not at Ballantrae but at the village of Borgue, near Kirkcudbright, where the brothers of Durrisdeed began their hating contest which finally brought them both to a chilly end in the savage-infested, frozen wilderness of colonial New York.

Scotland cherishes the memory of R. L. S. His birthplace at 8 Howard Place in Edinburgh is a museum, with relics, too, of Nurse "Cummy," the "angel of my infant life." Less visited is 17 Heriot Row, where little Louis probably first "looked abroad on foreign lands" by climbing the garden cherry tree, or from "a ship upon the stairs all built of the back-bedroom chairs."

Swanston Cottage, outside Edinburgh, the Stevenson's summer home, is distinguished by a collection of souvenirs and a description in *St. Ives.* Another cottage, Kinnaird near Pitlochry, where the ailing author spent two summer months, is marked by a tablet. Wider advertisement, however, is its kinship with the "moorland parish of Balweary," whose wild-eyed minister saw lightning strike down the haunted corpse of his yammering housekeeper, "Thrawn Janet."

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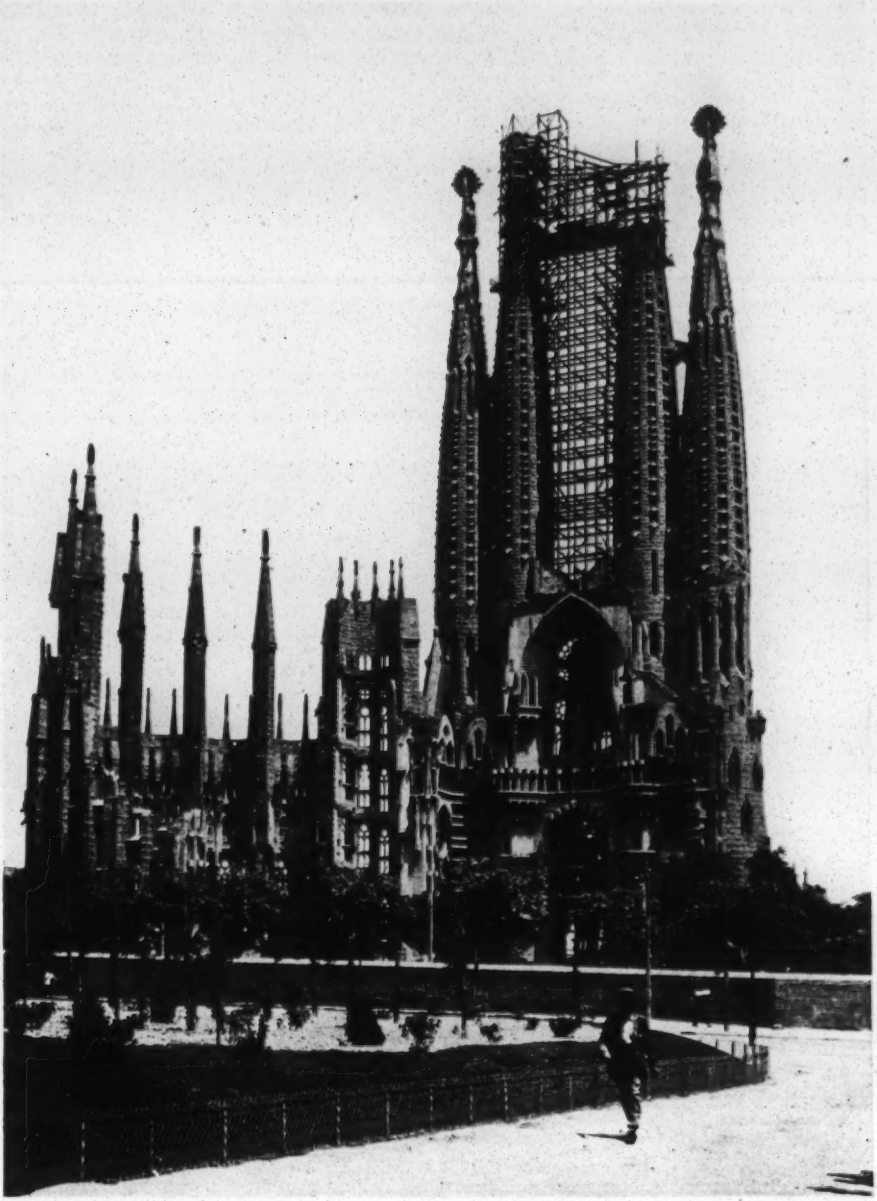

Photograph by Holmès from Galloway

"CORNCOB" SPIRES CUT THE BARCELONA SKYLINE

Air raids have not yet damaged the strange Cathedral of the new capital of Spain. Casting aside all architectural tradition, the Catalans have developed a modernistic style of building that has caused noisy debates among art critics. Wavy lines are used in apartment houses and park benches, and brilliant colors feature mosaic tile designs set in concrete.

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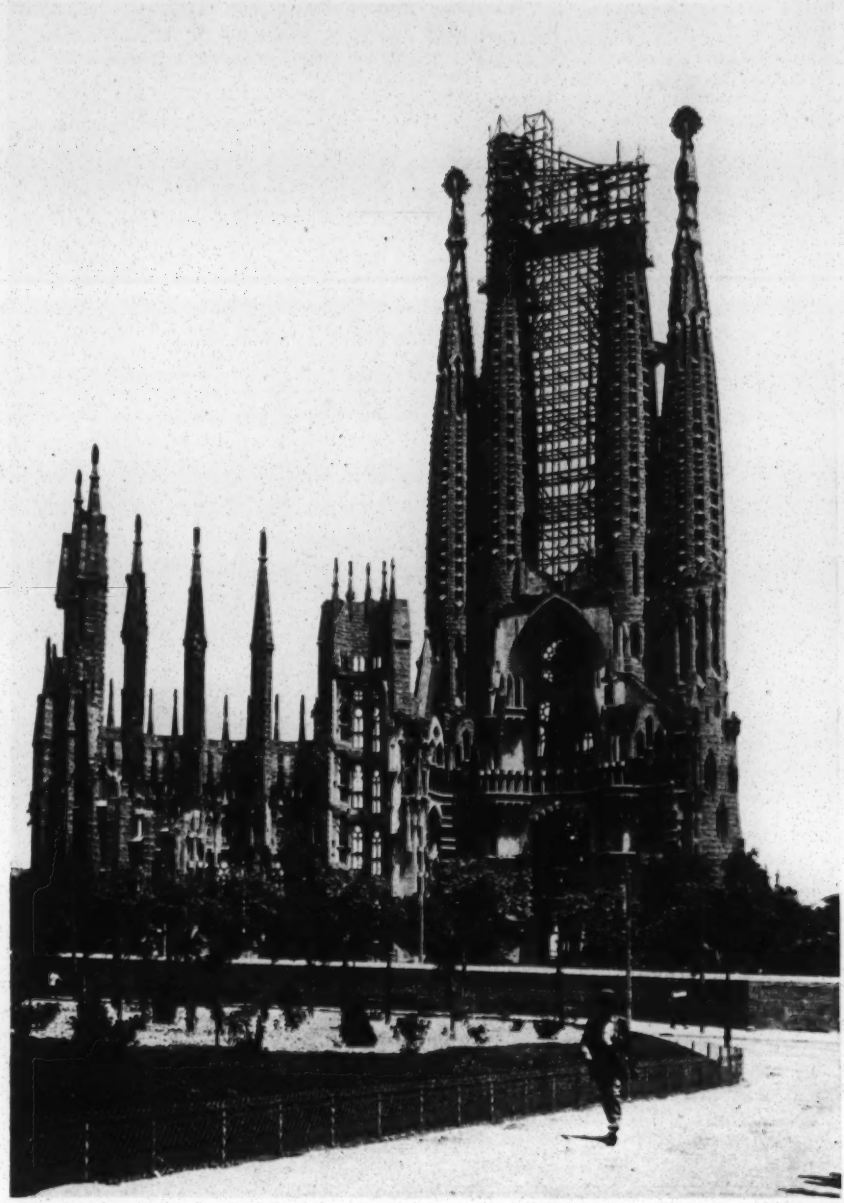

Photograph by Holmes from Galloway

"CORNCOB" SPIRES CUT THE BARCELONA SKYLINE

Air raids have not yet damaged the strange Cathedral of the new capital of Spain. Casting aside all architectural tradition, the Catalans have developed a modernistic style of building that has caused noisy debates among art critics. Wavy lines are used in apartment houses and park benches, and brilliant colors feature mosaic tile designs set in concrete.

The Pied Piper of health lured the invalid writer, self-styled "son of a bedpost," farther and farther from his native Scotland. A three-year haven was Bournemouth, seaside resort on England's southern edge. Here, in ivy-clad brick Skerryvore, the only home Stevenson owned in Great Britain, a nightmare shook Dr. Jekyll from the author's pen. Farther south went the invalid's odyssey, testing the French Riviera at Marseilles, Nice, and Mentone, with a breathing space at Hyères, in a mountain-framed chalet called La Solitude.

The France that got into print, however, was the medieval France of the *Sire de Malétroit's Door* and the genial Cevennes range, which Stevenson climbed in *Travels with a Donkey*. Surrounded by the snowy peaks of Davos, R.L.S. signed the pseudonym of Captain North to a serial yarn called *The Sea-Cook*, a story of blue horizons and steaming tropical marshes which later became famous as *Treasure Island*.

The American wanderings of the velvet-coated writer have two chapters, both with happy endings. His first trip took him by emigrant boat and emigrant train to California, where he almost died on a goat ranch in the Santa Lucia mountains, earned $2 a week as reporter in Monterey, married in San Francisco, and honeymooned in an abandoned camp at the Silverado mine. A memorial in San Francisco commemorates Stevenson's poverty-stricken days there, almost starving on 25-cent dinners. The Silverado camp is still almost as deserted as in the days of the *Silverado Squatters*.

The second Stevenson expedition to America was a march of triumph, with the now famous author dictating terms to publishers while wintering at Saranac Lake, New York, or visiting Manasquan, New Jersey. From San Francisco the writer who had launched many a ship in print finally realized his own boyhood dream, and sailed in the yacht *Casco* through the Golden Gate into the Pacific. This sunset trail led at last "where parrot islands anchored lie," and eventually to Samoa.

As Tusitala, "the teller of tales," he won a place in Samoan esteem as exalted as his hilltop mansion 600 feet above the town of Apia, on the island of Upolu. The chiefs whom he championed in their island feuds built in gratitude the Road of the Loving Heart, which winds up the steep mountain slope three miles through the jungle to his house. This home—Vailima, or "Five Waters," in honor of the rivulets pouring over falls nearby—was the last port of call in Stevenson's treasure hunt for health. Farther up the mountain, he found a final peaceful substitute, in the simple concrete tomb on the summit "under the wide and starry sky," as he prescribed in his own *Requiem*, which ends with these lines in bronze over his grave:

"Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill."

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Photograph by Rollo H. Beck

STEVENSON FOUND THEM ON HIS REAL-LIFE "TREASURE ISLAND"

Polynesian natives became Stevenson's friends on the Samoan island which gave him his long-sought health. About them and for them he wrote his humorous fable, "The Bottle Imp," which was printed in Samoan before it came out in an English edition. His interest in Samoan politics, then supervised by both British and German authorities, won him threats of deportation from the latter and rumors of a consulship from the former. These Rapa Island girls setting forth in dugouts for the taro fields are typical Polynesians in color and dress.